

Pathology Directorate

Microbiology

Appraisal Satisfaction Survey

Summer 2018

Introduction and Background

The assessment of staff appraisal satisfaction is an important aspect of our evaluation and improvement processes that enables us to provide a place to work that is responsive to the needs and development of our staff.

Since our ultimate customer is the patient, we direct all our efforts into providing a clinically based, timely cost-effective diagnostic service with the highest in-built quality standards while making sure our departmental staff is professional, well trained, confident and able to progress in their chosen career pathway within Microbiology.

Microbiology service is undertaken by highly skilled and experienced staff. Specimens are processed according to Standard Operating Procedures and performance is monitored by auditing process, internally and externally.

Regular review of the appraisal satisfaction and performance is undertaken together with consideration of feedback from our Microbiology staff to provide ways of improving the appraisal process.

As part of our UKAS accreditation to ISO 15189:2012 we required to contact our staff for feedback on the appraisals provided.

Our aim is to assess how happy are Microbiology staff about their appraisal and overall relationship with the line manager. This survey will help us to explore additional ways of providing a better place to work for a high skilled staff and raise the staff morale.

Method

The Survey was sent out to all staff from Microbiology department in Mid Yorkshire Trust based in PGH (33 staff). 22 responses were received (67% response rate).

The survey consisted of 10 questions (Q-Pulse: AUD145 – Microbiology Appraisal Satisfaction Survey Summer 2018).

The first 8 questions focused around the quality and performance of appraisal process staff received. Questions 9 and 10 were open type questions to give opportunity to staff to state their opinion and ideas of the improvement for the appraisal process.

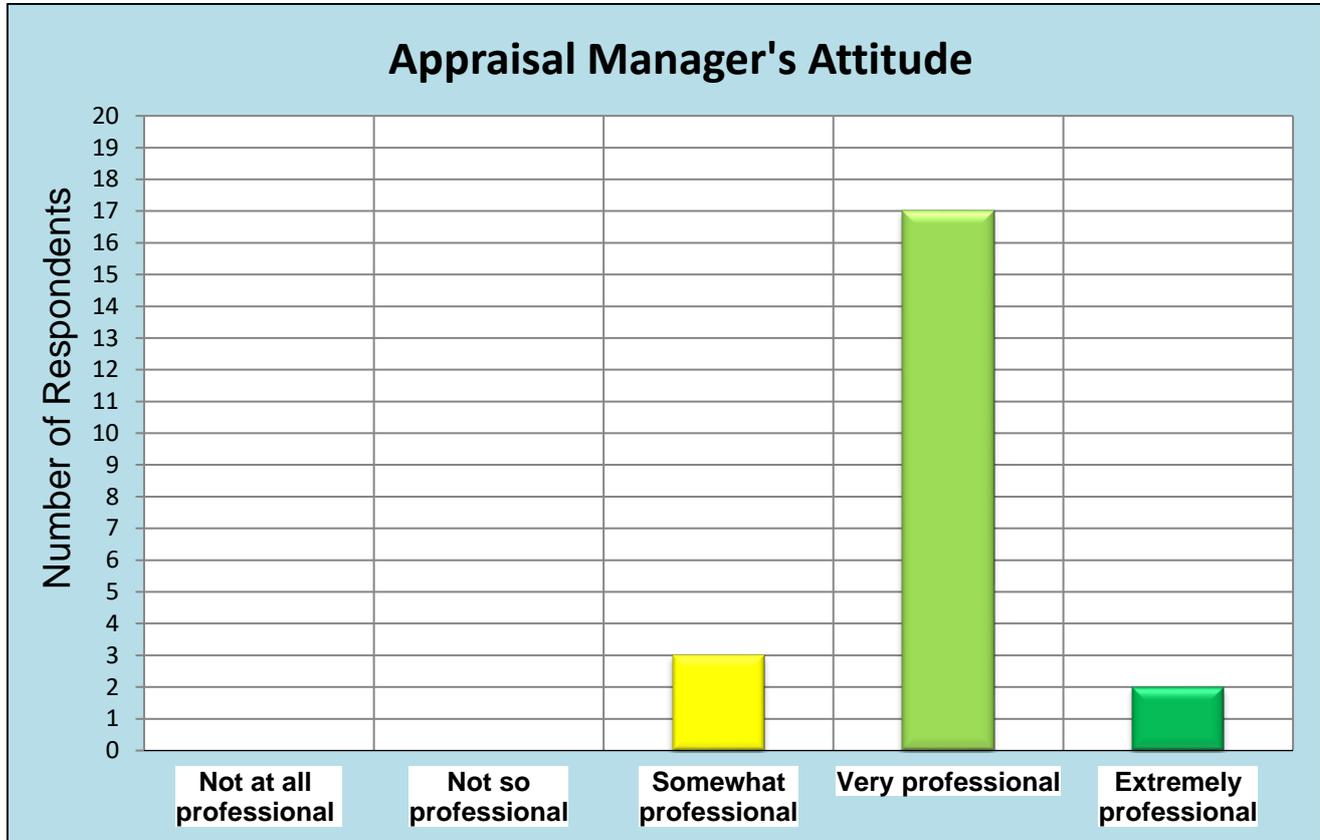
Participants were asked to rate an aspect of the appraisal process on the scale from 1-5 where 1 is representing 'poor' answer and 5 is representing 'high excellence' aspect of answers.

Or answer simple questions by stating their opinion and comments.

Below, Microbiology Appraisal Satisfaction survey results are illustrated.

Question 1

How professional was your line manager at your last appraisal meeting?



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| Total scoring responses | 22 |
| Question not answered | 0 |

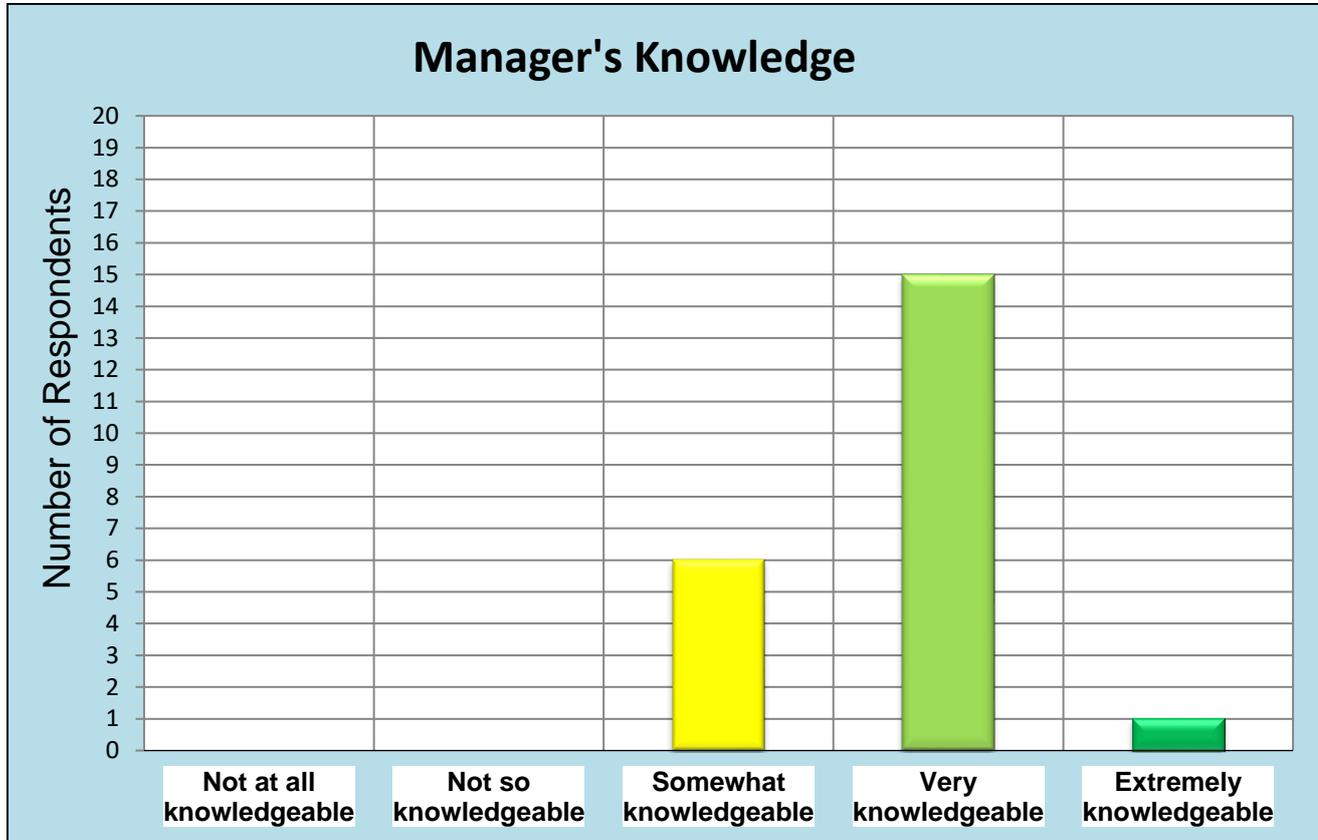
22 staff logged into the survey and all of them answered this question.

Majority of responses stated that appraisal manager's attitude was very professional (77%).

Fewer responses were received stating 'extreme professionalism' (9%).

Question 2

How knowledgeable was your line manager about your previous appraisal?



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| Total scoring responses | 22 |
| Question not answered | 0 |

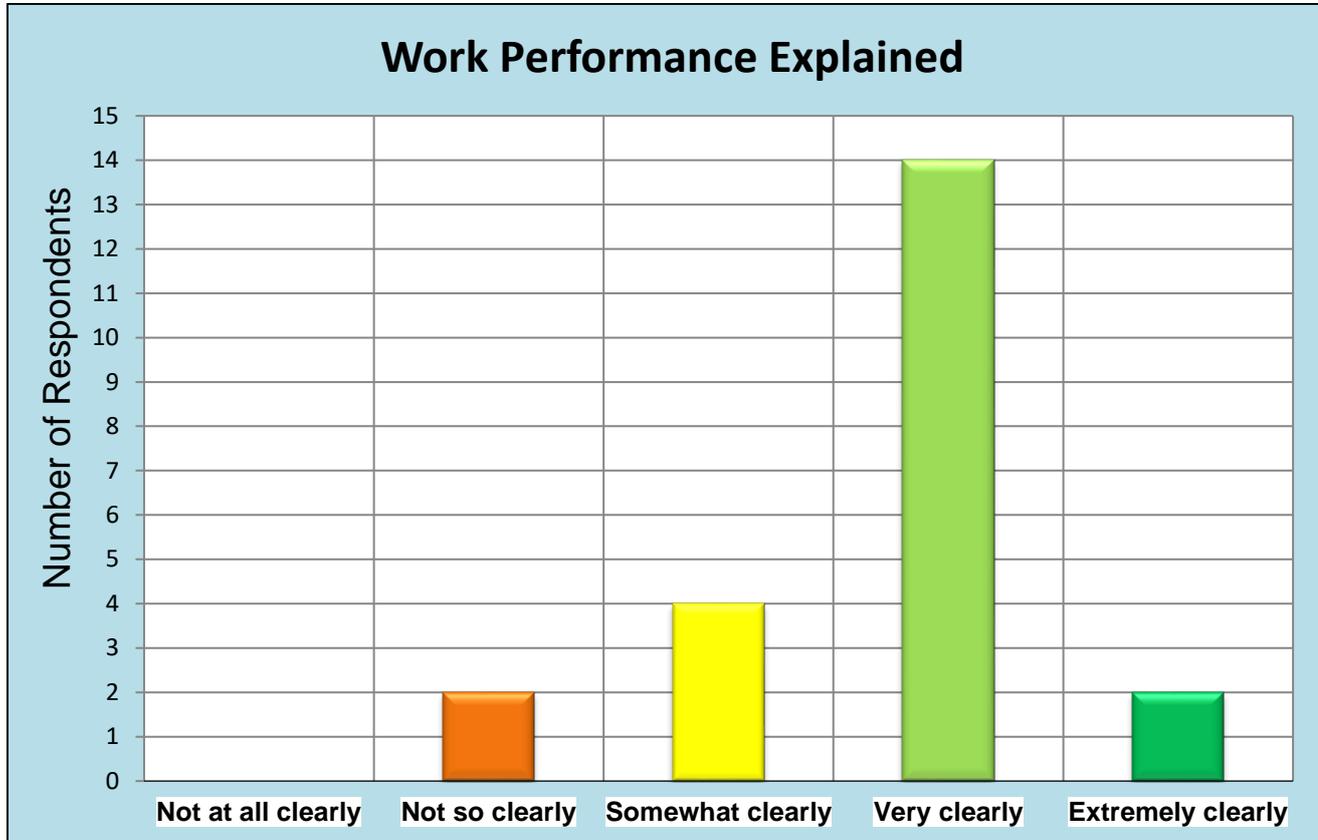
Very knowledgeable manager was described by 68% respondents. 5% responses stated 'extremely knowledgeable'.

This made a satisfactory of 73% overall for a level of knowledge of the line manager.

27% described that manager is 'somewhat knowledgeable'. There were no poor statements.

Question 3

How clearly did your line manager explain the details of your work performance to you?



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| Total scoring responses | 22 |
| Question not answered | 0 |

14 out of 22 respondents gave positive feedback with excellent mark from 2 members of the Microbiology staff.

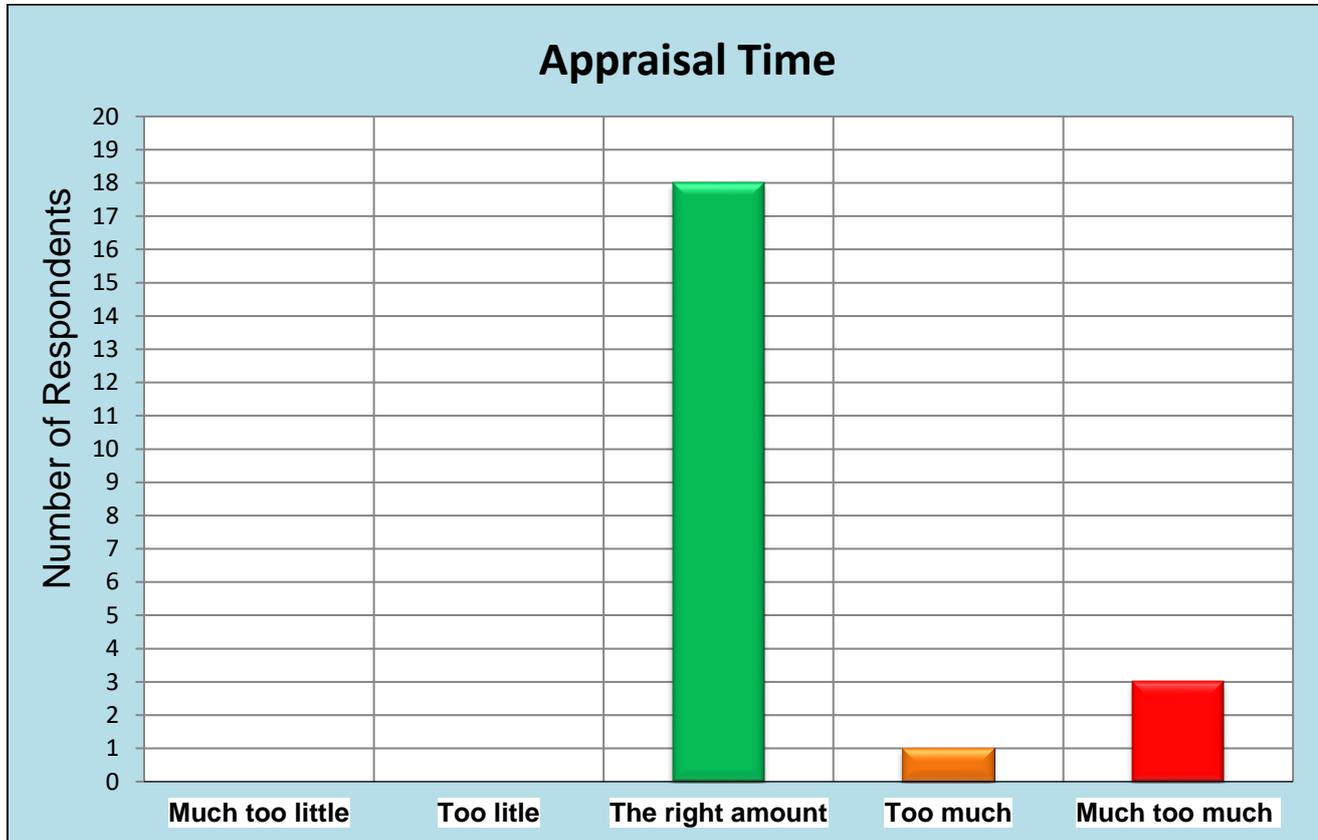
This gives 73% of satisfied staff.

Only 2 respondents marked the work performance as explained 'not so clearly'.

4 stated the explanation of the work performance was neither clear nor unclear by giving a middle mark.

Question 4

Did you feel that your line manager spent too much time, too little time, or about the right amount of time speaking with you at your appraisal meeting?



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| Total scoring responses | 22 |
| Question not answered | 0 |

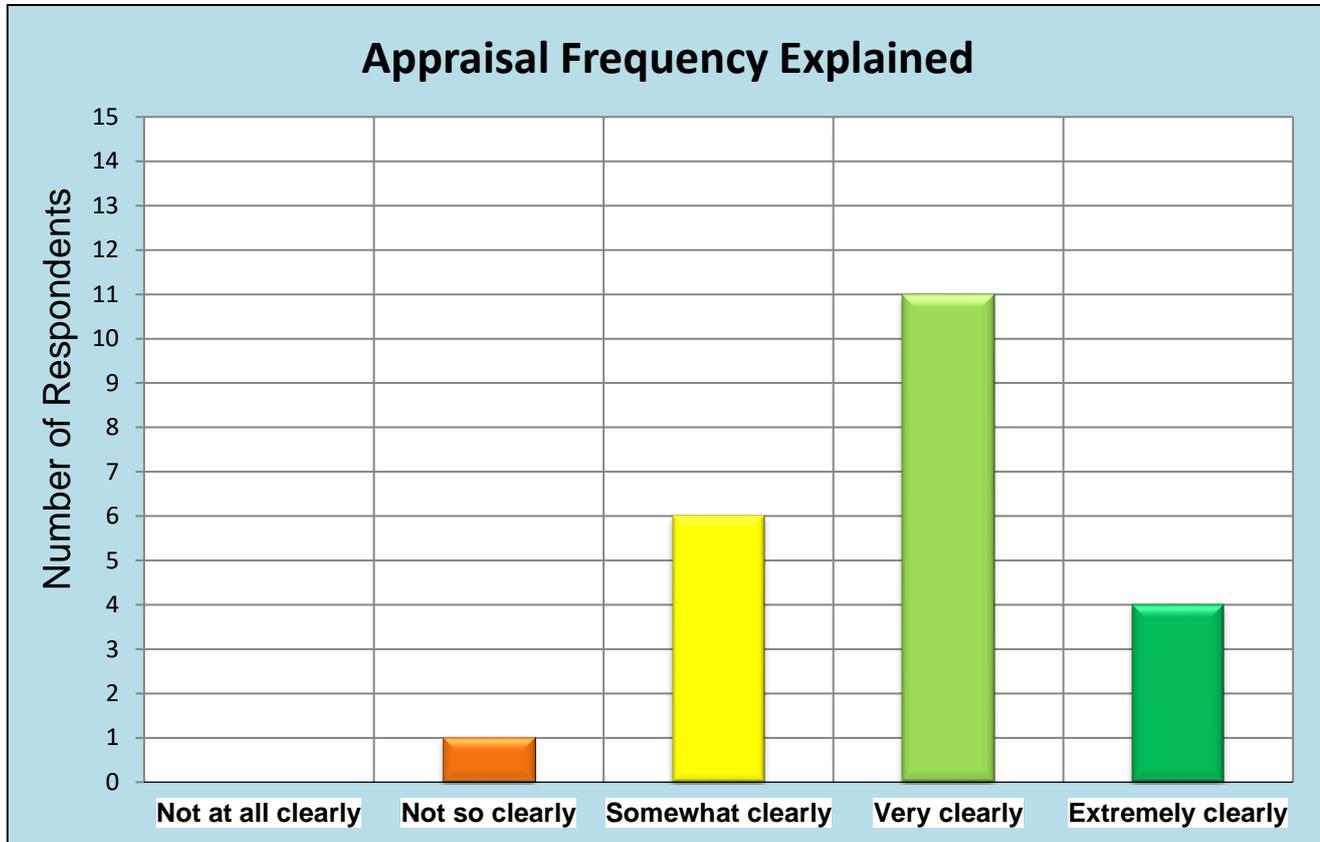
Overall shows 82% of staff are very satisfied about the allocated time for appraisal calling it ‘the right amount’ of time.

The rest of the staff stated that there was either ‘too much’ allocated time for appraisal or even ‘much too much’ (18%).

No one described allocated time as ‘too little’ or ‘much too little’.

Question 5

How clearly did your line manager explain the idea of having annual appraisal meetings?



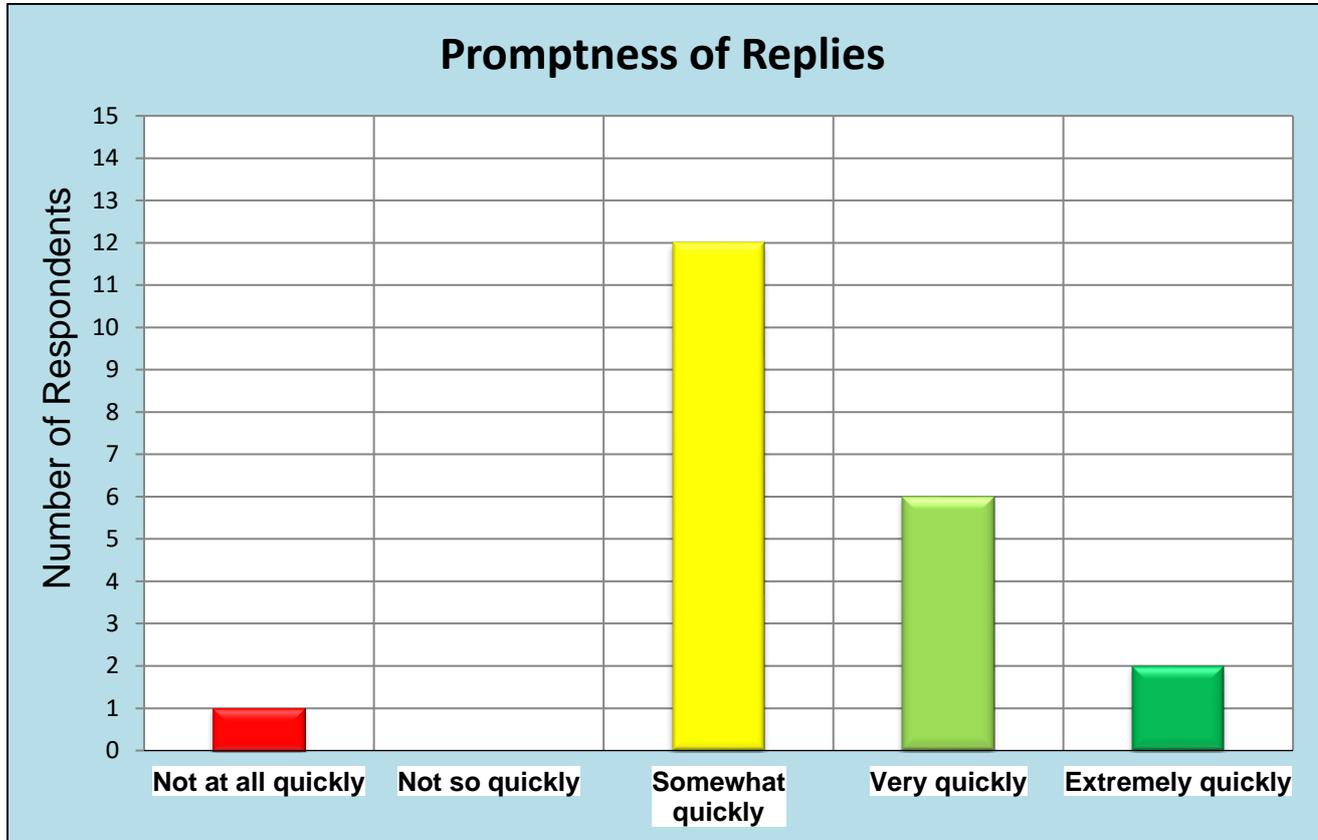
| | |
|-------------------------|----|
| Total scoring responses | 22 |
| Question not answered | 0 |

This question also got a high satisfaction mark of 68% with 15 staff members out of 22 describing the frequency explained as 'very clear' and 'extremely clear'.

However for 7 users this explanation deserved lower mark of 'somewhat clearly' or 'not so clearly'.

Question 6

How quickly did your manager reply to the concerns you raised during your last appraisal?



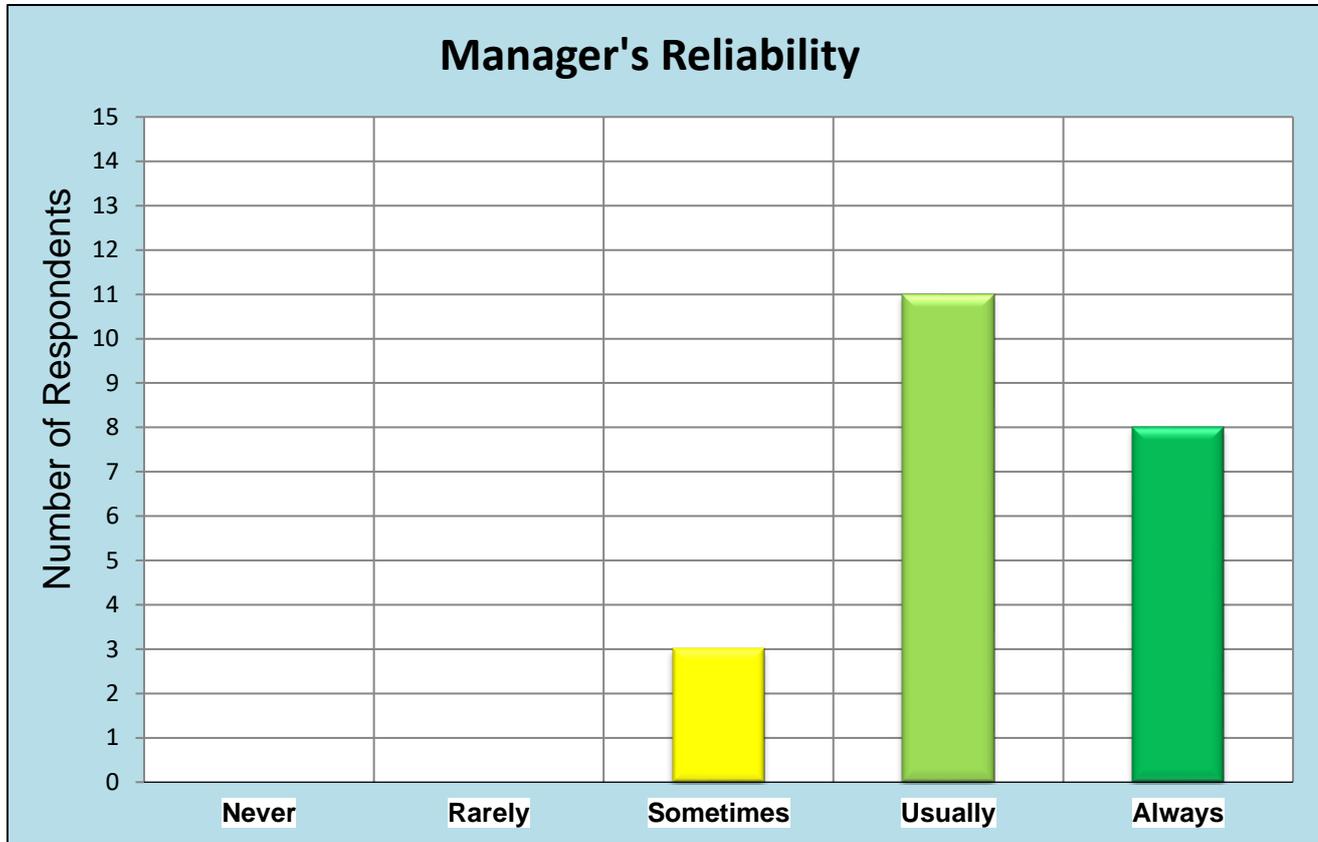
| | |
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| Total scoring responses | 22 |
| Question not answered | 0 |

The overall response to this question was 95% satisfaction of rating the promptness of manager's response as 'somewhat quick', 'very quick' and 'extremely quick'.

Unfortunately 1 member of staff marked the manager's promptness of response as very poor.

Question 7

Can you rely on your line manager to help you out with a work problem?



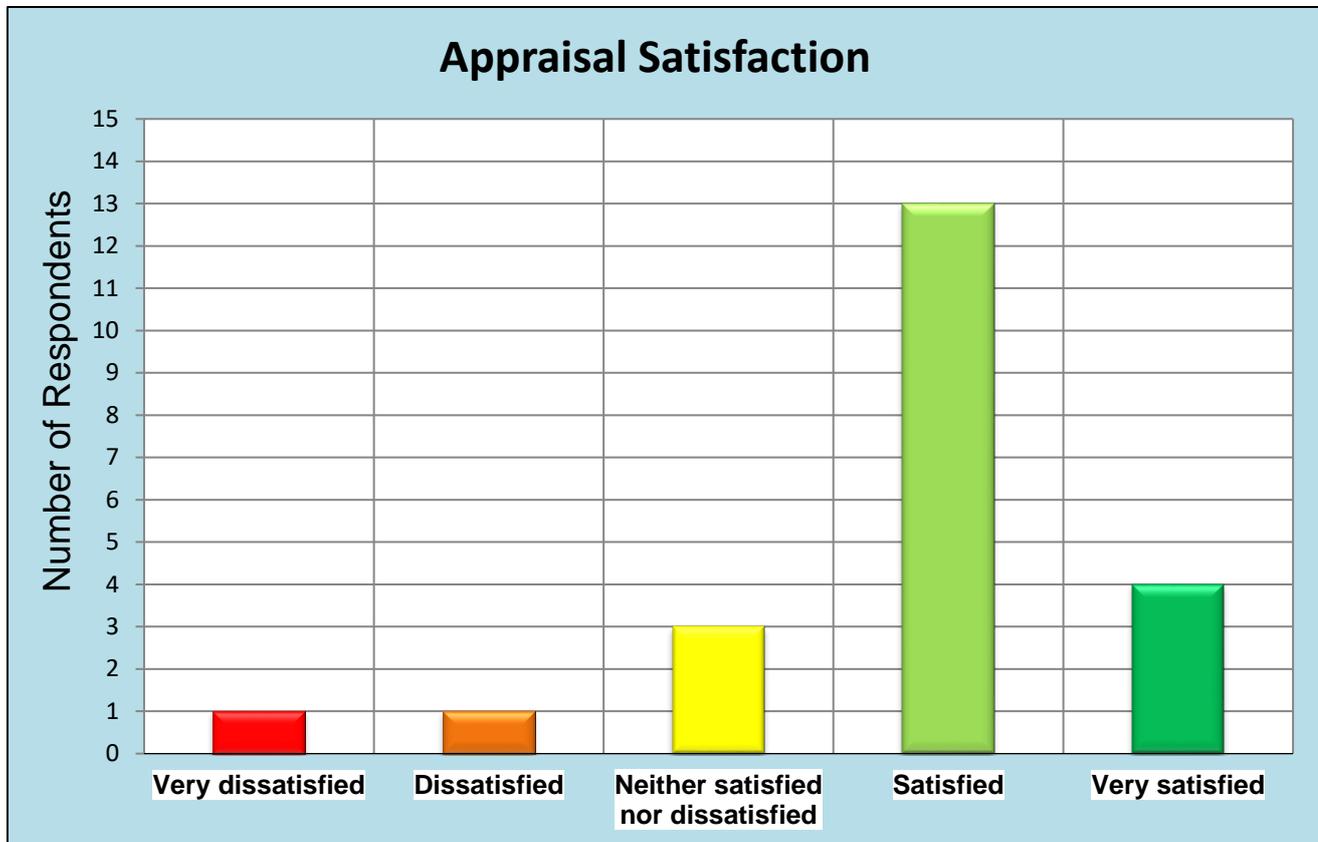
| | |
|-------------------------|----|
| Total scoring responses | 22 |
| Question not answered | 0 |

No low marks were received for this question giving excellent result of the staff line managers from 8 users out of 22 (36%).

11 members of Microbiology (50%) stated that they can 'usually' rely on their manager and 3 of them can 'sometimes' rely on their manager (14%).

Question 8

Overall, how satisfied were you with the appraisal process?



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| Total scoring responses | 22 |
| Question not answered | 0 |

Overall Microbiology appraisal process was rated very high with over 77% satisfaction.

4 of those staff rated the overall appraisal being 'very satisfied'.

Despite the over 77% satisfaction there were several responses either suggesting low satisfaction or neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

Question 9

What was your first impression after having your appraisal meeting?

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| Total scoring responses | 13 |
| Question not answered | 9 |

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Positive | That it was quick, painless, and concise. |
| | Good to have the opportunity to discuss work matters formally one to one. |
| | Satisfied with the conversation/outcome. |
| | That it went well. |
| | It went well. |
| | It went fine. |
| | Felt satisfied and my questions answered. |
| | I felt that I was appreciated at work. |
| Neutral | Just a tick sheet exercise. |
| | Another one out of the way. |
| Negative | The appraisal seemed to go well up until the point I mentioned that I would soon be starting a Biomedical Science master's course and enquired about progression within the microbiology department. The person who conducted my appraisal explained that no support would be given towards progression beyond being an MLA using the phrase "you are just an MLA" several times. I left the meeting feeling discouraged and undervalued. |
| | What was the point of that? |
| | I feel that the appraisal process has moved more towards the department as a whole and is less personal. |

13 comments were received all together with regards to this question.

Significant amount of positive comments were received complementing Microbiology appraisal process for being good, helpful, approachable and delivering appreciation, satisfaction and opportunity to discuss matters on one to one basis.

However 3 negative comments were also received.

1 of them with regards to discouragement and feeling undervalued, another one stating that appraisal did not focus on individual as such, rather on the whole department.

1 member of staff left the comment suggesting disappointment of the appraisal process and its purpose.

Microbiology's response to comments from staff:

If any member of staff feels that topics discussed at appraisal are not being dealt with appropriately, the concerns should be brought to the attention of the laboratory manager or pathology group manager immediately.

In response to the comment around staff development, microbiology should encourage staff to develop and further their education and skills. Although the department cannot always fund training courses, we will (wherever possible) support any member of staff who is undertaking studies that are appropriate to their development in the workplace. Examples of such support would be allowing time off for exams or assistance with projects. Any requests or discussions around support like this should be passed onto the lab manager either directly or via the appraiser as there is a process to follow before approval is granted. Decisions around training and development should not be made at the time of the appraisal.

In response to the remaining negative comments, the appraisal process is a two way process for discussing job roles, responsibilities and competencies within the department. The Trust recently changed the process so that it was more focused on the individual, rather than the organization, and discussions should be driven by the appraisee and not the appraiser. However, the requirements of the department are a part of the appraisal process because such discussion enables any general issues to be highlighted and hopefully resolved. The ultimate goal is to provide a service that is of the highest possible quality to ensure that patients receive the best treatment available and improving teamwork helps to achieve this.

Question 10

How would you improve the appraisal process?

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| Total scoring responses | 12 |
| Question not answered | 10 |

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| Positive | I was happy with the appraisal and would not change the process. |
| | No comments for improvements. |
| | Not sure, its fine as it is |
| | Leave as is. No change. |
| | Its fine as it is. |
| Improvement Suggestions | Less focus on goals etc. on paper, more focus on the individual. |
| | Any concerns raised, dealt with. Progression in the work place would be a nice incentive |
| | More support should be given to those who are considering developing and progressing in any part of their professional life rather than being actively discouraged as I was. Phrases such as "you are only an MLA" should be avoided to prevent members of staff feeling offended and undervalued. |
| | Make it bi-annual for staff who have been in the same role for ten years or more. Limit to no more than one hour. |
| | By actively acting on the requests of the appraise within a 3 month period where possible |
| | Focus more on the individual rather than the department as a whole. |
| Neutral | N/A |

12 comments were received all together.

The great majority of Microbiology staff who participated in this survey do not feel that there are any areas requiring improvement (68%) and 5 of them left a positive comment regarding appraisal process stating that they are happy about it and it is fine as it is.

These 5 positive comments from 42% staff complemented the Microbiology appraisal process (highlighted in green in a table) and underlined overall satisfactory appraisal process provided.

6 comments were left suggesting improvement with regards to mainly focusing on individuals and their development and training sessions.

It is always encouraging to receive comments illustrating positive outcome and also suggestions for improvement such as regarding the individuals training and development to show us on what issues to focus on.

Microbiology’s response to comments from staff:

‘Less focus on goals etc. on paper, more focus on the individual’ and ‘Focus more on the individual rather than the department as a whole’.– As employees of Mid Yorks Hospitals NHS Trust, we have

standards to maintain and goals to achieve. Development of any individual must be appropriate for the department as a whole and ultimately the requirements of the Trust. Also, individual development must be seen as fair throughout the department and not favoured towards single members of staff.

‘Any concerns raised, dealt with. Progression in the work place would be a nice incentive’ – *If concerns are not being dealt with in an appropriate or timely manner, they should be brought to the attention of the lab manager or pathology group manager. Unfortunately, there is no guaranteed progression in the workplace due to the nature of the roles and it would not be economically viable or practical to reserve funding for all roles to progress to the highest banding. Staff are welcome to apply for any positions appropriate to their qualifications if vacancies arise, but the recruitment process has to be followed to ensure that the process is fair for all.*

‘More support should be given to those who are considering developing and progressing in any part of their professional life rather than being actively discouraged as I was. Phrases such as "you are only an MLA" should be avoided to prevent members of staff feeling offended and undervalued’ – *See response to question 9.*

‘Make it bi-annual for staff who have been in the same role for ten years or more. Limit to no more than one hour’. – *The Trust would have to make the decision to extend the period between appraisals. Appraisals should not take more than one hour, but there may be occasions where a lot of things need to be discussed and it would be counter-productive to cut an appraisal short if discussion was still in progress.*

‘By actively acting on the requests of the appraisee within a 3 month period where possible’. – *During the appraisal, timescales of any outcomes should be agreed and recorded. The appraisee can then approach the appropriate person for an update if the timescales have been exceeded. Individuals should be actively pursuing updates of any requests that are not dealt with in a timely and appropriate manner.*

Conclusion

Thank you for taking the time to complete the questionnaire.

The Mid Yorkshire Hospital NHS Trust always strives for improvement so whilst the majority of responses were positive, there were comments that highlighted areas where actions could be taken to improve the Microbiology staff appraisal process.